

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

IO-13 ACDA-12 /089 W

-----020542 221855Z /41

R 221417Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9080

INFO AMCONSUL KADUNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, NI, SHUM

SUBJECT: THE SHAGARI/KANO NORTHERN PARTY

REF: (A) LAGOS 7365, (B) LAGOS 7170, (C) KADUNA 673

1. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, MEETINGS OF PROMINENT NORTHERN POLITICIANS WHO ARE COALESCING AROUND A SHEHU SHAGARI-AMINU KANO ALLIANCE WERE HELD RECENTLY IN LAGOS AND IN KADUNA.

2. A FRONTPAGE STORY BY JAMES ODAFE IN THE JUNE 21 NIGERIAN OBSERVER REPORTS THAT A "UNITY FRONT" POLITICAL PARTY WAS FOUNDED AT A RECNT MEETING IN LAGOS WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE FORMER NORTHERN PEOPLES' CONGRESS (NPC), NORTHERN ELEMENTS PROGRESSIVE UNION (NEPU), AND THE UNITED MIDDLE BELT CONGRESS (UMBC). THE ODAFE ACCOUNT REPORTS THAT FIVE REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH OF THE TEN NORTHERN STATES ATTENDED THE MEETING INCLUDING SHEHU SHAGARI, ADAMU CIROMA, KAM SELEM, SHETTIMA ALI MONGUNO, SOLA SARAHI, ISA KAITA, UMARU DIKKO, AND IBRAHIM

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TAHIR. FURTHERMORE, VETERAN MIDDLE BELT LEADER JOSEPH TARKA "FLEW IN FROM LONDON FOR THE MEETING." ODAFE REPORTS THAT AMINU KANO AND INUWA WADA WERE NOT PRESENT AT THE MEETING BUT SENT MESSAGES OF SUPPORT. BOTH MEN WERE SAID TO BE ABSENT BECAUSE THEY WERE RECEIVING MEDICAL TREATMENT.

4. ODAFE REPORTS THAT THE MEETING SET UP STEERING, POLITICAL, AND FINANCIAL COMMITTEES. THE STEERING COMMITTEE IS HEADED BY JOSEPH TARKA. OTHER MEMEBERS OF THE COMMITTEE INCLUDE UMARU DIKKO AND ISA KAITA.

5. ODAFE ADDS THAT WAZIRI IBRAHIM DID NOT ATTEND THE MEETING AND HIS SUPPORTERS TOLD THE GROUP THAT BORNO STATE SUPPORTS IBRAHIM FOR PRESIDENT IN 1979.

6. AN ACCOUNT BY ERIC TENIOLA IN THE JUNE 21 PUNCH REPORTS THAT A POLITICAL MEETING TOOK PLACE IN KADUNA OVER THE WEEKEND. ACCORDING TO TENIOLA, TAHIR, SARAHI, TARKA AND DIKKO WERE PRESENT PLUS REPRESENTATIVES FROM EASTERN STATES. SHAGARI, CIROMA, AND ALI MONGUNO "WERE SAID TO HAVE INTEREST IN THE MEETING BUT DID NOT SHOW UP." TENIOLA DESCRIBES THE MEETING AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE JUNE 3 CONFERENCE AT THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS IN LAGOS.

7. COMMENT: WE ASSUME THAT ODAFE'S ACCOUNT REFERS TO THE JUNE 3 MEETING (REF B) WHILE TENIOLA'S REPORT SEEMS TO BE ABOUT A LATER MEETING. IN ANY CASE, BOTH REPORTS REFLECT THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IMPRESSION HERE THAT A MAJOR NORTHERN POLITICAL PARTY BUILT AROUND A SHAGARI-KANO AXIS WILL EMERGE WHEN THE BAN ON POLITICS IS LIFTED. WYMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS, PARTY ALLIANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LAGOS07725
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780261-0021
Format: TEL
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780631/aaaabaqx.tel
Line Count: 98
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7099bf83-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 LAGOS 7365, 78 LAGOS 7170, 78 KADUNA 673
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2249950
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE SHAGARI/KANO NORTHERN PARTY
TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, SHUM, NI
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7099bf83-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014